

But Why Glendale? A History of Armenian Immigration to Southern California

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Abstract:

Despite its many contributions to Los Angeles, the internally complex community of Armenian Angelenos remains enigmatically absent from academic print. As a result, its history remains untold. While Armenians live throughout Southern California, the greatest concentration exists in Glendale, where Armenians make up a demographic majority (approximately 40 percent of the population) and have done much to reconfigure this homogenous, sleepy, sundown town of the 1950s into an ethnically diverse and economically booming urban center. This article presents a brief history of Armenian immigration to Southern California and attempts to explain why Glendale has become the world's most demographically concentrated Armenian diasporic hub. It does so by situating the history of Glendale's Armenian community in a complex matrix of international, national, and local events.

Keywords: California history, Glendale, Armenian diaspora, immigration, U.S. ethnic history

Introduction

Los Angeles contains the most visible Armenian diaspora worldwide; however yet it has received virtually no scholarly attention. The following pages begin to shed light on this community by providing a prefatory account of Armenians' historical immigration to and settlement of Southern California. The following begins with a short history of Armenian migration to the United States. The article then hones in on Los Angeles, where the densest concentration of Armenians in the United States resides; within the greater Los Angeles area, Armenians make up an ethnic majority in Glendale. To date, the reasons for Armenians' sudden and accelerated settlement of Glendale remains unclear. While many Angelenos and Armenian diasporans recognize Glendale as the epicenter of Armenian American habitation, no one has yet clarified why or how this came about. Prior to the 1960s, only a handful of Armenians resided in the ethnically homogenous and notoriously prejudicial community. However, at present, approximately 40 percent of Glendale's population of over 200,000 residents claims Armenian ancestry. To be sure, Armenians inhabit several locales scattered throughout Greater Los

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Angeles and several communities throughout the United States. But there exists no explanation as to why Glendale has become the epicenter of the Armenian community outside Armenia.

Based on interviews, archives, and census data, I explore the multilayered settlement of Armenians in Southern California in general, and in Glendale in particular.

While this article attempts to document Armenians' historical immigration to and settlement of Southern California, it also analyzes these phenomena from various perspectives. Armenian history is often told through a limited prism, one that reflects the internal dynamics of the community in question. However, this article's findings reflect the diverse and dialectic variables through which communities shape their communities and their communities shape them. Armenians represent an important part of Los Angeles's history, and this article is a first attempt to explore the internally diverse Armenian Angeleno community.¹

Background

Early Migration to the United States

Armenians' residency in the United States dates back to the American colonial period. The first person identified as Armenian in the New World came, most likely, in 1618 or 1619.² Referred to as "Martin the Armenian," this early Armenian immigrant is mentioned several times in the available records until 1624, at which time, presumably, Martin returned to England with the tobacco he had grown in Virginia.³ Several other Armenians followed Martin to Virginia, and their contributions are recorded in various spheres from the mid-seventeenth century onward. By the 17th century, Armenians were already renowned for their silk-weaving production.⁴ As such, early colonial figures sought expertise from Armenians abroad around 1653.⁵ One of these Armenians, "George the Armenian," has been eulogized in print. John Ferrer endorses early Armenian settlers thus:

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His two Armenians from Turkey sent
Are now most busy on his brave attempt
And had he stock sufficient for next yeare
Ten thousand pound of Silk would then appeare
And to the skies his worthy deeds upreare. (Mirak 1983, 36)⁶

Despite their numerical and cultural insignificance, the handful of early Armenian settlers, as Mirak eloquently articulates, played a “mythological role for a later generation of immigrant Armenians . . . to feel part of American history; like Yankee bluebloods, they too possessed deep roots in America.”⁷ Thus, Armenians have been woven into America’s multicultural fabric, from the very outset.

Armenian migration to North America grew more conspicuously in the nineteenth century. Students and clergymen migrated to the United States for largely educational purposes in the first third of the century. In addition, a smattering of businesspeople moved to the industrializing city centers of the United States; and, toward the end of the century, rural Armenians migrated in larger numbers than they had previously.⁸ In fact, by the late nineteenth century, approximately 5,000 Armenians had immigrated to the United States.⁹ As their situation at home became increasingly vulnerable under Ottoman control, these numbers increased substantially during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Although the number of immigrants varied by year (with a rather significant decrease occurring on account of World War I), 1921 alone brought over 10,000 Armenians to U.S. territory.¹⁰ By World War II, approximately 80,000 Armenians had relocated to the United States. A considerable portion came directly or indirectly from Ottoman territory, where they faced considerable hardship and peril.¹¹ However, several also emigrated from Russian territories. On account of voyage expenses, only families with the means to send at least one member could make the trip.

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However, as the cost to transit between New York and Constantinople dropped during the first years of the twentieth century, an increasing number could afford passage.

As indicated, most Armenians docked in New York (although smaller groupings docked in Boston, Philadelphia, Mexico, Canada, etc.), and, as a result, settled in the Northeast.

However, a small number starting in the twentieth century entered via California as well. Those reaching Californian ports often had come from Japan or China traveling via Russia and Siberia.¹²

Armenian immigration to the United States in the first fifteen years of the twentieth century fluctuated dramatically on account of the political unrest in the unraveling Ottoman Empire. The Young Turk movement initially recruited and then persecuted Armenians in various locations throughout Turkey. While the recruitment neutralized emigration, persecution accelerated it. Overall, the number of Armenians residing in the United States increased exponentially during the period leading up to World War I. Most estimates claim that roughly 1,500 Armenians came to the United States prior to 1891; an additional 12,500 Armenians are said to have come between 1891 and 1898; and, rather strikingly, nearly 52,000 arrived between 1899 and 1914.¹³ Thus, by the start of World War I, approximately 66,000 Armenians had relocated to the United States.

These numbers continued to expand (indeed, between 1920 and 1924, more than 20,000 arrived) until 1924, when the quota system came into effect.¹⁴ This system, maintained until 1965, significantly curtailed the ingress of Armenians resettling in the United States. Some exceptions to the quota, however, did exist: those Armenians who could procure Nansen passports (documents supplied to refugees by the League of Nations) found a means by which to relocate.¹⁵ In addition, the American National Committee for Homeless Armenians (ANCHA)

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helped place approximately 4,500 Soviet Armenians who found themselves stuck in Germany or Italy following the Second World War. The Displaced Persons Act exempted these “displaced persons” (DPs). The DPs are revisited in the discussion below, for many of them settled in Los Angeles. Taken as a whole, ANCHA intervened on behalf of 25,000 Armenian refugees from various places throughout the world despite the quotas otherwise placed on many prospective immigrants in the mid-twentieth century.¹⁶ Restrictive immigration policies in the United States curtailed the incremental increase, with fewer than 10,000 Armenians entering the country between 1925 and 1949. These numbers did not begin to grow again until midcentury.

While there existed a concentration in and around factories scattered throughout the Northeast (with the largest concentrations in industrial cities such as Worcester, Boston, Watertown, Lynn, and Lowell), Armenians were also found in a variety of other places and in a variety of other capacities: they worked in the silk in Rhode Island and New Jersey, railroads and electricity in New York, coal mines in Pennsylvania, iron and steel in Illinois, automobiles in Michigan (Detroit), slaughter yards in Illinois (Chicago), furniture in Wisconsin, steel and cement in Southern California, and so on.¹⁷ Thus, Armenians began planting roots and forming communities in various places from the outset of the twentieth century.

While residing in the eastern United States, Armenian immigrants, like most twentieth-century immigrants, worked in factories. However, many Armenians, especially those coming from Ottoman territory, had been trained in farming and agriculture. Thus, when they had the opportunity to do so, many opted to venture west, where they could use their skills in a new, more promising milieu.

Early Immigration to California

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While most Armenian immigrants worked in manufacturing and industrial capacities, some, as mentioned above, brought with them talent in farming and viniculture. Although they lived in various places throughout California from the late nineteenth century onward, the most concentrated and significant settlement arose first in Fresno. Mirak documents this early settlement in his book *Torn between Two Lands* (1983). In this text, he chronicles the auspicious timing of ambitious Armenians who moved to Fresno just as the fallow fields blossomed into a prosperous agricultural center on account of the irrigation and railroad tracks that had just been laid.¹⁸ The first clustering of Fresno Armenians arrived in the 1870s. Consistent with the entrepreneurial spirit associated with early Armenian settlers, the first Armenians to settle in Fresno were talented business owners. The Seropian family came in the hope that the climate might improve the health of the family's paterfamilias, John. Once settled, they opened a general store in the 1880s.¹⁹ During their time in Fresno, the Seropians dabbled in the fruit industry, coffee shops, grocery stores, dried fruit packaging, goods shipment, among other enterprises. Their business ventures brought them attention not only among other Fresnoans, but also among other Armenians scattered throughout the United States. Seeing the opportunities available in Fresno, Armenians began to follow the Seropians' westward ambitions.

The Seropians and other early Fresnoan Armenian settlers (such as Stepan Shahamirian and Melkon Markarian) dabbled in agriculture on land both rented and purchased. Their land acquisitions provided space for subsequent Fresnoan Armenians to inhabit. The vast majority of early Armenian settlers migrated to Fresno from other parts of the United States. LaPiere's 1930 study states that 84 percent of early Armenian settlers had moved to Fresno after living, on average, 5.7 years in some other U.S. city beforehand.²⁰ And Armenians continued to come in large numbers. By the outbreak of World War I, 10,000 were estimated to reside in Fresno—

making up about 25 percent of the county's minority population.²¹ Outbidding competitors, newly settled Armenians acquired lands to cultivate grapes, melons, figs, and other fruits. By 1904, Armenians farmed more than 10,000 acres of land that they owned.²² While farming was by no means their only occupation, Fresnan Armenians gained the most prominence (and, later, notoriety) in this occupational field. And the prominence came not only from landholding, but also from capital gain: prior to the Nineteenth Amendment's prohibitions on alcohol consumption in 1919, prices for raisins soared and Armenian viniculturalists began to amass great wealth. With this wealth, they purchased more property and expanded their business ventures. Although this inflation plummeted in the 1920s, Armenians had already established themselves as a permanent fixture of the thriving agricultural scene of Fresno and its environs.

And Fresno proved a boon for many Armenian farmers, not only those in grapes and raisins. The first and only U.S.-based Armenian community, Yetttem—about forty miles southeast of Fresno—developed a commercial pistachio orchard; the first Armenian millionaire in California, Krikor Arakelian, also known as the “Melon King,” led melon production; and the Markarians cornered a substantial portion of the fig market—20 percent of U.S. production.²³ This early period proved a truly fecund moment in Armenian economic mobilization. Even after the farming industry began to decline, post-genocide Armenians who settled in and around Fresno continued to buy up and cultivate land. While their fortunes were often less auspicious than their predecessors', farming in Fresno still proved a striking improvement from what they had only recently survived. In addition, agriculture didn't require tremendous familiarity with the local institutions, practices, or language, which also favorably oriented many newly arrived Fresnan Armenians to farming.

Armenian residence also expanded beyond Fresno. Other communities quickly sprouted in the environs of this fertile soil. Just as Armenians' settlement of the northeastern United States or Southern California proved diffuse, so too was their settlement of Northern California. Even now, there are Armenian churches in Fresno, Yettlem, Fowler, Reedley, and Wahtoke. Although these smaller communities have gradually declined, they testify to the geographical breadth of Armenian settlement and ambition in the early twentieth century.

These early Fresno Armenians overcame adversity and prospered in the face of unfamiliarity, prejudice, and competition.²⁴ As Mirak describes them, "Because of their business abilities, work ethic, frugal living, and good management, all in a generally prosperous economic climate, the Armenians in and around Fresno achieved considerable success before World War I."²⁵ Their success is reflected in the number of local institutions they created—churches, schools, newspapers, restaurants, etc. This impressive community established a precedent of achievement for California Armenians after them.

To be sure, throughout this period, Armenians had already begun to establish residence in Southern California; however, they remain a comparatively quiescent population in the early part of the twentieth century. No one would likely have anticipated that, shortly after the Second World War, the central node of Armenian diasporic activity would shift so rapidly to various sites throughout Los Angeles—Pasadena, Boyle Heights, Montebello, Hollywood, and, most strikingly, Glendale.

Immigration to Los Angeles

While the growth of Los Angeles's Armenian community is largely associated with political tumult in the Middle East and Russia in the latter half of the twentieth century, Armenians, in smaller numbers, inhabited the city much earlier. They worked in various

capacities. Among the first were artisans who set up carpet shops in Los Angeles and Pasadena. As the Seropians had perceived in Fresno a more salutary climate, these entrepreneurs, such as the Pashigian brothers of Pasadena, typically moved westward for mercantile opportunity in established communities in the late nineteenth century. And, as before, these were trailblazing and ambitious individuals. While their numbers were small, their businesses often became rooted in the city's establishments. The aforementioned Pashigians' rug business, for example, still operates in central Pasadena.

Among the first—the so-called “Russian Armenians”—came to Los Angeles at the turn of the twentieth century. Their history is closely aligned with that of the Russian Dukhobors and Molokans. These groups had been persecuted in Russia since the late eighteenth century.²⁶ In 1895, Czar Nicholas II persecuted the Dukhobors residing in the Caucasus on account of their refusal to serve in the royal military.²⁷ Among those persecuted included a group of 4,000 who were forcibly relocated to Armenian and Georgian villages. After living in close proximity to Armenians for several years, many social ties had been forged. In 1898, after securing financial and political relief (from the likes of Count Tolstoy and others), many sailed, ultimately, for Winnipeg, Canada. Transnational circulations, such as letters, eventually resulted in the chain migration of other Dukhobors, as well as their Armenian neighbors, to Canada in subsequent years. From Canada, many Dukhobors relocated to Los Angeles. And, as such, when the Russian Armenians arrived in Canada, several followed.²⁸ In addition, economic hardship and increasing conflict (in the Russian Revolution of 1905 and the Russo-Tartar Wars of 1905–1907) increased Russian Armenian emigration from the Caucasus to the New World, and, ultimately, to Los Angeles, in the first decade of the twentieth century. This small group of Russian Armenians was among the first in Greater Los Angeles (most prominently in Riverside).

Several of the original Russian Armenians settled in the ethnically diverse community of Boyle Heights. This neighborhood attracted diverse new settlers since it had streetcars—giving commuters access to downtown Los Angeles.²⁹ Its ethnic diversity earned it the moniker “the Ellis Island of New York.” In addition, affluent landholders subdivided their estates and began renting them to recent immigrants at relatively affordable rates.³⁰ Boyle Heights’s population expanded considerably in the opening decades of the twentieth century; this expansion included Russian Armenians (and Russian Molokans) as well as Jews, Mexicans, and African Americans. The Russian Armenians brought knowledge and the wherewithal to ease their transition into the rapidly expanding American metropolis. Indeed, Los Angeles’s population doubled (577,000 to 1.24 million) in the 1920s alone.³¹ It was in these settlement pockets that a sense of Armenian presence began to emerge.

Even before the mid-twentieth century, however, the distinct migratory streams lent themselves to an intra-ethnically diverse community. The lack of institutional and organizational infrastructure inhibited this regionally diverse population from cohering as an ethnic community. A slow trickle of descendants of genocide survivors from the Ottoman Empire (via various locations), displaced persons from the Soviet Union, and political refugees from the Middle East relocated to Los Angeles. Not only were they culturally divided, but they settled in distinct areas within the city: Pasadena, Montebello, Beverly Hills, etc. As the historian Richard Hovannisian (himself a 1960s internal immigrant from Fresno to Los Angeles) shared in an interview:

The community largely consisted of two parts. One was old, [the] Ottoman Armenian community. Some of them had come earlier, very early on to LA. But others of [them] had gone to Fresno and bought farms, but then, during the Great Depression, they couldn’t make their payments. So they were foreclosed upon. And many of those people moved to LA and became small-shop proprietors, for the most part—mom and pop grocery stores, photo engraving, a number of other things. So they were the bulk of the community. They got things moving here in Los Angeles. But there was also another part of the community that had come very early on, around the turn of the 20C, the so-called

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“Russian Armenians,” who came from the region of Alexandropol, Gyumri, and Kars.... So these people concentrated in East Los Angeles, and they were sort of exotic because they did Caucasian dances, and all the other things that we have now become accustomed to. But, for us Western Armenians, it was quite different because we were more sedate than they were. And it was in those years also that, even in the 50s, that the community got strong enough on its feet that it began to organize groups outside the church.

The foresight of several early figures provided the organizational infrastructure upon which to begin the difficult task of organizing and collectivizing this diverse, dispersed population. These figures, including people such as Mateos Ferrahian, Alex Pilibos, Gabriel Injejikian, Kirk Kerkorian, and Arshag Dickranian, built the infrastructure necessary for Armenians to establish a foothold in Los Angeles. To be sure, as the discussion below will reflect, subsequent waves of Armenians from the Middle East, post-Soviet countries, and Armenia would diversify this already complex society; however, these early visionaries established Armenian schools, churches, businesses, and so on—the ethnic organizations and platforms necessary for the establishment of an Armenian Angeleno community.

Before Glendale, Hollywood was home to the greatest concentration of Armenians in Los Angeles in the latter half of the twentieth century. This community was the first to concentrate sufficient numbers to resemble an Armenian enclave. The community’s contributions are pervasive: restaurants, shops, schools, churches, etc. While Armenians from a variety of places settled in Hollywood prior to Glendale’s surge, many have since left. Newcomers in the 1960s came to Hollywood in order to join co-ethnics. While Armenians had settled in Hollywood much earlier in the twentieth century, a significant wave came in the 1970s as Soviet dissidents. A second wave occurred in the 1980s and continued with the fall of the Soviet Union (with the establishment of an independent Republic of Armenia). This community became the ultimate destination for many post-Soviet Armenians (as well as others), who brought a distinct set of cultural and political orientations. But its urban culture appealed increasingly less to Armenian

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newcomers. As Hollywood's urbanization increased in the 1960s through the 1980s, its appeal to many newcomer Armenians decreased commensurately. By the 1980s, the impetus had clearly shifted to Glendale and surrounding communities.

Nonetheless, before this shift took place, Hollywood's Armenian community had accomplished a lot. Hollywood Armenians concentrated their energies in several fields, many of which expanded considerably over the twentieth century. Areas of salient contribution included commerce and automobiles. Armenians became involved in several pre-existing industries and mobilized commercially. Armenians' pride in their contributions gave rise to a district becoming named, perhaps a bit anachronistically, "Little Armenia" in October 2000. Seeing the district named "Thai Town," a community member, Garo Keurjikian, and owner of an automotive company remonstrated to city councilmember Jackie Goldberg. Goldberg urged the Armenian community to procure 10,000 votes in favor of representation. Through community outreach, the signatures were acquired and the designation assigned. This designation represents Armenians' imprint on the city, even as its Armenian community has waned in recent years.

While Glendale has more recently become the epicenter of Armenian institutional and political incorporation, most Armenian commercial franchises or chains originated in Hollywood: the popular restaurant chain Zankou's Chicken and the franchise grocery outlet Jon's, for example, began in Hollywood. Armenian automotive work has become quite prominent in Hollywood, and, to this day, Armenians own a substantial portion of local car shops. Close proximity to an urban landscape and a far more integrationist mind-set have also led Hollywood Armenians to adapt forms entirely absent elsewhere in the diaspora, such as the first version of an Armenian street gang, Armenian Power. While the gang began initially as way to

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protect siblings and friends from pre-existing street gangs, it gradually adapted to harsh urban realities and began dabbling in money laundering, extortion, and other forms of theft.

Hollywood's Armenian population, although scant now, reflects an ethnic enclave. "Little Armenia" (like North Hollywood, Pasadena, and Montebello) has a culture distinct from that of Glendale. And community members are well aware of these distinctions. In an interview with the only Armenian from Armenia to run, albeit unsuccessfully, for council in Hollywood, he shared of his upbringing: "When I was growing up I would go to Glendale. My aunt lived in Glendale. I went to Glendale to play basketball at Maple Park. But, other than that, I did not really connect with their [Iranian Armenian] culture. They were different.... We didn't interact; there just wasn't much." Even though this figure sees the efficacy of Glendale Armenians' political successes, he acknowledges, to this day, the strict cultural differences that separate different Armenian neighborhoods scattered throughout Los Angeles. As with Pasadena and Montebello before, or North Hollywood and Burbank now, Hollywood Armenians warrant their own, in-depth treatment, for their distinctive character and contributions to the Los Angeles mosaic.

Glendale Armenians

Armenians' spontaneous settlement of Glendale may, at first, seem surprising. To be sure, Armenians had inhabited Greater Los Angeles for nearly a century prior to the 1970s. However, Glendale was home to relatively few Armenians through the 1960s as compared to other areas, such as Hollywood, Montebello, and Pasadena. In addition, Glendale's local ordinances were notoriously prohibitive and discriminatory. Through the 1960s, Glendale was a sundown town—that is, a community in which minority groups were prohibited after the sun had set. The police would often escort non-"white" people in sundown towns to the city limits lest

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their presence invoke violence from the local population. Armenians' "whiteness" by the mid-1960s may not have been as contested as it had been, for example, in Fresno only a few decades before. Nonetheless, Armenians continued to face discrimination. One Glendale resident says of the community in the 1960s, "Hispanics and people of Arabic and Armenian descent were tolerated, but only if they lived in areas in the part of town bordering Los Angeles, not in the 'upper' part nearer the hills."³² For these reasons, Armenians' rapid, concentrated settlement of Glendale in the 1970s and 1980s may seem a bit peculiar. Why did Glendale become such a popular destination for newly arrived Armenian immigrants in the 1970s? Armenians had already established communities in various places. In fact, Hollywood's growing Armenian community had already begun to take definite shape by midcentury. As such, it seemed as though this community would grow into Los Angeles's Armenian hub. Nevertheless, the momentum had shifted dramatically to Glendale by the 1980s.

Early Years

Among the first Armenians to settle in Glendale were members of the Jamogchian family. According to Paul Robert Ignatius, his grandfather, Avedis Jamogchian, purchased property and built a home in Glendale after moving to California in 1911. Avedis became quite active with the Near East Relief Committee. Through this organization, he spearheaded initiatives to assist Armenians left destitute in the wake of genocide. A local judge and manager of the Southern California Armenian Relief Committee, H. N. Wells also participated in the "Armenian Drive" of 1918 and 1919. Wells had spent time in Syria and Turkey, where he experienced firsthand the atrocities Armenians suffered. In his appeal, he wrote passionately on behalf of Armenians and the necessity to aid them in a time of acute distress. He invoked Glendale residents' civic duty to aid Armenians, stating, "It does not seem conceivable that the

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response to the appeal for funds to help the destitute Armenians will not be answered doubly.

Every cent contributed will be sent to the relief of the 4,000,000 known to be starving, to the 400,000 orphans who are actually crying for something to eat. This community [Glendale] will have an opportunity to do its share.”³³ Wills’s appeal and Glendale’s response ultimately proved among the most successful in Greater Los Angeles. Thus, Glendale’s earliest Armenian inhabitants (and others) undertook intensive outreach on behalf of displaced Armenians.

According to the *Glendale Evening News*, Glendale “went over the top in the Armenian Drive” and raised \$2,144.58 to contribute to the cause.³⁴ As the same article observes, “In view of the fact that returns are lagging in Los Angeles and many other communities... it is cheering to know that this city [Glendale] has oversubscribed and helped that much in making good deficiencies elsewhere.” This is among the first recorded outreach efforts between Glendale and Armenians.

According to a thesis written in 1923, about five families, or approximately twenty Armenians, lived in Glendale during the first two decades of the twentieth century.³⁵ The *Glendale Evening News* distributed an article in 1922 entitled “‘Taxi Nish’ Secures Citizenship Papers.” In the article, Nushon Bader Parsekian is identified as a resident of Glendale. A native of “Ban, Armenia,” (Van) “Nish” is described as a self-reliant taxi driver whose father was “killed in a rebellion against Turkey.”³⁶ Nish moved to the United States in 1909 and settled in Glendale around 1918. The article identifies his residence at 119 West Broadway. A more recognizable early Glendale resident was Paul Robert Ignatius (noted above), who ultimately served as secretary of the Navy between 1967 and 1969 as well as assistant secretary of defense under President Johnson. Ignatius has produced a memoir, *Now I Know in Part*, in which he describes his upbringing in early twentieth-century Glendale. This is a useful document that

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describes the suburban environment of that time. Still, Avedis, Nish, Ignatius, and others like them were exceptional, not typical. Only in the 1950s and 1960s did Glendale begin to receive a steadier stream of Armenian newcomers.

In 1976, one of Glendale's local newspapers spotlighted the city's burgeoning Armenian community. In it, the author asked, "But why Glendale?," responding, "The consensus among Armenians interviewed is that Glendale has become a center for their nationality because it is considered a peaceful, conservative town and therefore a good environment for people who strongly believe in traditions."³⁷ While likely true in a general sense, this doesn't provide a concrete explanation for why, out of several peaceful suburbs, Glendale has become perhaps among the most densely concentrated Armenian diasporic settlements. In fact, neighboring Pasadena fit a similar description and had been a site of Armenian habitation since the opening years of the twentieth century. Even more strikingly, Pasadena granted Armenians protected minority status in 1985. By including its Armenian population in affirmative action policy, Pasadena recognized Armenians officially as a minority³⁸—a status shift that is interpreted along different community lines.³⁹ Two early twentieth-century court decisions—*In re Halladjian et.* (1909) and *United States v. Cartozian* (1924–1925)—granted Armenians the right to naturalization on account of their determined "whiteness."⁴⁰ As such, Pasadena provided prospective Armenian immigrants an avenue through which to involve themselves in local institutions. Nonetheless, Glendale continued to prove the most significant destination for a large majority of globally migrating Armenians.⁴¹ And, by the late 1980s, when President Reagan increased the quota of Soviet Armenians allowed entry to the United States, the conversation had shifted to local Glendale concerns, such as how to fund and integrate the influx of coming

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students in need of teachers and residents in need of low-income housing.⁴² And yet Armenians' rapid and robust settlement of Glendale remains unresolved in print.

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Much of the pattern of Armenian migration to Glendale relates to U.S. legislation. The civil rights movement of the 1960s played a critical role in transforming American immigration policies. Responding to institutionalized prejudice, African American activists and others advocated on behalf of many marginalized groups. These activists forced the American political system to change its treatment of many groups. In 1965, Congress passed the Hart-Celler Act (or Immigration and Nationality Act). Before this legislation, immigration had been restricted largely to immigrants from Western Europe. However, the Hart-Celler Act led to an unprecedented diversification of America, bringing migrants from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Southern and Eastern Europe. These immigrants and their children also inculcated civil rights principles and altered American ethnic identification. As Gary Gerstle has argued, "Immigrant groups, both old and new, quickly adopted a similar stance in regard to their ethnic cultures, thereby broadening and intensifying the effort to locate America's vitality in its ethnic and racial diversity."⁴³ Thus, post-1965 immigrants transformed the United States, both demographically and ideologically. Americans' aggressive, pre-1960s assimilationist attitudes now came into rather stark contact with increasing ethnic awareness and empowerment. Still, as ethnic communities expanded and took root through the 1970s and 1980s, this growing awareness infused many ethnic organizations and community members. On account of the diversity it brought, this legislation marked a decisive shift in American society, one that continues to resonate today.

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It is in this charged climate that Armenians began coming to Southern California in large numbers. And the countries from which they came were also undergoing profound internal alterations. By the mid-twentieth century, Armenians had formed distinct and influential communities in diverse locations worldwide. The last several decades of the twentieth century, however, witnessed a radical reconfiguration of these historical communities. Armenians came to Southern California in distinct waves and in response to several upheavals. They came in the wake of the political tumult of or leading up to the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990), the Iranian Revolution (1979), the Iran-Iraq War (1980-8) the facilitation of emigration from the USSR due to the Jackson-Vanik amendment (1974) collapse of the Soviet Union (1991), the economic crash of the Republic of Armenia (1992-onwards), etc.⁴⁴

Despite Armenians' scattered presence in the United States before 1965, Glendale would ultimately become the most densely concentrated and diverse Armenian diasporic settlement in the country. Like so many other immigrant groups from various locations throughout the world, Armenian immigrants and refugees alike made Greater Los Angeles their home in the latter half of the twentieth century. Joining already settled co-ethnics, Armenians moved to Hollywood, Pasadena, Burbank, and so on. But Armenians' presence would most thoroughly transform San Fernando's sleepy sundown town, Glendale.

There are many generic answer why Glendale, including its location and access to the highway, the safety of its community, the quality of its schools and college, and its family-oriented neighborhoods. But these qualities existed in several places in Southern California. Three specific factors led to this community's efflorescence: (1) the earlier settlement of Glendale by some noteworthy Armenians—particularly well-to-do families and students from Iran in the 1950s and 1960s; (2) socioeconomic changes occurring in Glendale (and the United

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States more generally) in the 1960s and early 1970s; and (3) the establishment of Armenian institutions, such as an Armenian church and school, by the mid-1970s.

Several Iranian Armenian families came to Glendale in the 1950s and 1960s, and, later, became quite prominent in business and politics. For example, Larry Zarian came to Glendale in the early 1950s. After completing high school in Massachusetts, he moved to Southern California. Following a brief stay in Hollywood, he relocated to Glendale. Still a teenager, Zarian spent almost his entire adulthood in Glendale. Given his age at the time of the move, education played a role in his decision to settle in Glendale. According to a family member, “a friend told him how great Glendale was and how nice Glendale College was, so he hopped a ride with some guys and came out to California by car from Boston.” In an interview, an Armenian who came from Jerusalem in the aftermath of the Palestinian War of 1948 (along with a small cluster of other Armenians) and studied at Glendale Community College (then Glendale College) in the late 1950s said he remembered about a dozen Armenians enrolled at Glendale College by 1958 (as of 2015, there were 7,277 Armenians registered, making up 32 percent of the 15,843 for-credit students, and 48 percent of the 4,599 non-credit students). Zarian moved to Glendale in 1953 and joined this small handful of other Armenian students. He worked as a businessman for many years but eventually became interested in public office. After an unsuccessful bid in 1967, he won a seat on Glendale’s City Council in 1983. He was the first Armenian in Glendale to win political office. Zarian, amoderate conservative, was active in Glendale politics for sixteen years, from 1983 to 1999, eventually becoming Glendale’s first Armenian mayor. His tenure as mayor occurred between 1986 and 1987, 1990 and 1991, 1993 and 1994, and 1997 and 1998. Zarian’s visibility as a public official (and public persona) also attracted newcomers to Glendale as well as influenced a later generation of Armenian politicians. As mayor and public

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personality, Zarian strengthened Armenians' association with Glendale.

In addition to Larry Zarian, another visible Iranian Armenian family, the Shirvanians, moved to Glendale on account of the Adventist Church. In a personal interview, a member of this family said that her family had been converted to Adventism by missionaries abroad and moved to Glendale in order to be close to their church and community. Glendale boasted the region's most active Adventist community. In addition, the Shirvanian family had strong ties to the Republican Party, and Glendale was also a Republican headquarters before, ironically, Armenian activists helped shift the city's political orientation from the late 1990s onward. The Shirvanian family invested in rubbish collection and amassed a great fortune— establishing Western Waste Industries in 1955. Their Iranian Armenian network and visible success explain several subsequent Armenians' migrations from Iran. Perceiving trouble afoot in the Shah's regime, several of the Shirvanians' friends relocated to Glendale. In fact, many of the first Iranian Armenians who purchased homes in Glendale's hills came directly from the Shirvanians' social network. Family and friend networks brought many of the first Iranian Armenians to Glendale. Thus, the presence of prominent Iranian Armenian families, such as the Zarians and Shirvanians, helped establish a growing Glendale Armenian presence from 1950s and 1960s onward.

Apart from these early Iranian Armenian settlements, Iran had been sending students to the United States even before the passage of the Hart-Celler Act. After years boycotting Iranian oil, the United States reopened trade once the Shah had been restored in 1953. In the mid-twentieth century, the resumption of oil revenue and aid to Iran bolstered its economy significantly. As Mehdi Bozorgmehr and Georges Sabagh explain, "The oil revenues increased 16 times from \$34 million in 1954–55 to \$555 million in 1963, and more than doubled to \$1.2 billion in 1970–71."⁴⁵ This revenue led to state-sponsored industrialization and modernization

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initiatives. Despite the inflow of money, Iran lacked the educational facilities and human resources to generate specialists to operate the machinery. The Shah's government therefore invested in education by sending Iranian students abroad in large numbers. The shortage of space in Iran's universities along with the difficulty of entrance exams most likely led to exponential increases in Iranian and Iranian Armenian student visitors coming to the United States—from 18,000 in 1963 to 227,497 in 1997.⁴⁶ Since Iranian Armenians had already settled there, Glendale was an attractive option for many students who entered in the 1960s.

Glendale, too, suited many Iranian Armenian students socioeconomically. Those who arrived prior to 1979 often had the resources to travel and study abroad. As such, they represented a relatively affluent segment of Iranian society. Unlike traditional immigrants, Iranian Armenian students came with intellectual and material resources. Iran's economy had boomed, and those from this socioeconomic stratum of society profited from that boom. According to Homa Katouzian, Iran's oil revenues increased from \$4.4 billion to \$17.1 billion in the mid-1970s alone.⁴⁷ Many of the first Iranian Armenians to settle in Glendale, whether directly or indirectly, were the beneficiaries of these new revenue flows. In a personal interview, Richard Hovannisian reflected:

The Persian Armenians were different from other Armenians because most of them came with some degree of wealth. Whereas Soviet Armenians and even those from the Middle East didn't have that wealth, Iranian Armenians, because of their association with the imperial household and regime and because they are hardworking people, they were able to get a part of their wealth out, sometimes by bribery and other means to the U.S.

As such, early Iranian Armenians, particularly those whose migrations predate the Shah's demise, could afford to buy homes in relatively affluent neighborhoods as opposed to settling in densely concentrated urban centers. Compared to Hollywood or other urban locations, the conurbation of Glendale presented an appealing alternative to these student visitors and their

relatives or social networks. And their selection conditioned their settlement patterns. Similar to the Taiwanese in Monterey Park or first-wave Cubans in Florida, early Iranian Armenian settlers “leapfrogged” socioeconomic impecuniousness and settled in suburban comfort shortly after their arrival. But this population consisted only of a demographic cluster; its numbers were not significant enough to play a transformative role in Glendale society.

However, Glendale itself experienced several sociopolitical changes at the same time. By the early 1970s, Glendale had begun to take on a more progressive character. Just as migrants from Iran, Cuba, Korea, and elsewhere began settling in Glendale, several city ordinances made new ethnic settlement possible. While several traditions persisted—such as housing discrimination, which targeted African Americans through the early 2000s—the civil rights ethos that had been altering national legislation also became a mainstay of local communities. For example, native Glendale residents protested against the presence of the neo-Nazi headquarters in 1964.⁴⁸ A new generation of Glendale natives sought to oust its prejudicial organizations. In the 1960s, Glendale government officials created new bodies and organizations that sought to safeguard minority rights. Although Armenians would not enter the scene with demographic prominence until the mid-1970s, the 1960s laid a foundation that would enable new ethnic members of society to participate in Glendale’s development.

This foundation included an increasingly booming commercial sector. Responding to economic downturn in the 1950s and 1960s, Glendale city officials sought to attract prospective consumers by constructing new shopping malls and opening up new business opportunities. City officials incentivized large companies by waiving business license fees and payroll and corporation taxes.⁴⁹ For many businesses, Glendale also proved less chaotic than the frenetic downtown district. Nestle, DreamWorks, Disney, Whole Foods, and other corporations

eventually established themselves in Glendale, and, in turn, bolstered its local economy. In addition, conservative housing measures, ironically, created more opportunities for multi-ethnic newcomers. Among the new business clientele that entered Glendale were several commercial real estate developers. As older Glendale natives moved out, developers came in to build large apartment complexes. This profit-driven scheme provided spaces in which less affluent immigrants could settle. Developers purchased the property of landowners and built several new multi-unit apartment buildings.⁵⁰ As Armenians were coming to Southern California from places such as Iraq, Iran, and Jordan, Glendale's recently constructed affordable housing units provided these immigrants with a peaceful, family-oriented housing option. As such, these commercial changes provided a foundation upon which Armenians could establish themselves.

The tenor of official city discourse also began changing with the emergence of increasingly visible ethnic groups, including Armenians, Koreans, Cubans, and Filipinos. In 1972, C. E. Perkins, then city manager, exhorted the Glendale Rotary Club to prepare itself as Glendale could no longer remain an isolate in an increasingly diverse America.⁵¹ In 1974, the city put forth its most dramatic infrastructural and commercial initiative to date: the construction of Glendale's massive shopping mall, the Galleria. The first wing of the Galleria opened in 1976, and it continued to grow through the early 1980s. At the time of its construction, it numbered among the largest malls in the United States.

National legislation and local socioeconomic changes overlapped with Armenians' massive multipolar arrival to Southern California. By the early 1970s, they had already formed a fairly visible cluster in Hollywood; however, the axis had shifted rather dramatically by the 1980s. Glendale had become a magnet for Armenians from all over. Even Armenians (some second- or third-generation) from other parts of Los Angeles and the United States relocated to

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Glendale. Two decades after families like the Shirvanians and the Zarians entered the homogenous sundown town, Glendale had emerged as the most demographically concentrated Armenian habitation throughout the Americas. Student visitors had been replaced by economic immigrants and refugees as Armenian diasporic centers experienced increased sociopolitical tumult. Unlike the Iranian Armenians who came to Glendale before 1979, later Armenian immigrants often had to leave everything behind and begin anew. But, on account of the international tumult, the status of those who had come as students also changed to that of immigrant. So they, too, had to leave behind their homes. After the revolution, Iranian Armenian refugees joined their friends and family in Glendale (although typically via another location—such as Austria, Sweden, or Germany—first). By the end of the 1980s, intra-ethnically diverse Armenians had become a visible presence in Glendale. Early migrants owned large homes in the north, while newcomers inhabited small apartment complexes in the south.

As Armenians planted new roots in Glendale, they created important community centers. The establishment of several Armenian institutions made Glendale increasingly visible and accessible to newcomers. By the end of the 1980s, several key institutions and organizations had been established, such as a branch of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), the Iranian Armenian Society, the Homenetmen, the Scouts, and the Armenian Education Foundation. Symbolically, perhaps the most significant Armenian institution—an Armenian church (in conjunction with an Armenian school)—opened in 1975. As Anny Bakalian conjectures, once a specific demographic threshold has been met, Armenians typically establish a church for the community.⁵² This signals roots in the community. But the Armenian Church is not a monolithic entity, and association with one branch or another sometimes factors into migration trajectories. From the fifteenth century onward, the Armenian Apostolic Church has existed as two distinct

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branches with two Catholicoi: at present, these church centers are in Antelias (Lebanon) and Etchmiadzin (Armenia). The Holy See of Cilicia, the head of the Western Prelacy, is located in Antelias. The Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin is located in Etchmiadzin. Before the establishment of St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church in 1975, the Armenian Church with the largest congregation was located in Hollywood. For many Armenians, proximity to an Armenian church (as well as a school) factors into their migration choices. The opening of St. Mary's Church and its attendant school offered prospective Armenian newcomers community structures with which they could engage. To be sure, it is difficult to assess the extent to which a church factored into Armenian decision making; however, family and friend networks within the peaceful, suburban community coupled with the existence of several Armenian institutions, such as a church and school, likely shaped the migratory patterns of many migrants in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

In my interviews, Iraqi Armenians frequently cited access to an Armenian church and school as paramount in their migration experiences. While Iraqi Armenians' leanings tend toward Etchmiadzin in Iraq, migration routes via several other places, such as Lebanon, Syria, and Greece, brought them into contact with Antelian churches. Upon settlement, Iraqi Armenians, who lacked the same material resources as early Iranian Armenians, depended heavily on the church. In several interviews, correspondents noted the majority Iraqi Armenian congregationists who visited the Iranian Armenian-funded St. Mary's Church in Glendale in the 1970s and after. One Iraqi Armenian, who moved to Glendale in the 1970s, said of his community:

This is the only way to help you keep your identity: You have to go to Church and you have to go to school. It was mandatory for us. In the [Armenian] school, we had a religion class every single day.... Everyday you have to have your Armenian classes:

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language, history, and religion. So this is the only way you can keep the community together.... So when we came here, that was one of the factors.

Another person I interviewed, a relative of one of St. Mary's founders and someone who was raised attending events at St. Mary's, said of the late 1970s: "The Church was growing; they started to have bingo nights. So every Friday we would go to bingo nights. And it became a nice, community church. And it started to grow. And at that point it was a lot of Iraqi Armenians coming and then slowly the Persian Armenians." While several Iraqi Armenians settled in Hollywood and elsewhere, the establishment of an Armenian church in Glendale attracted several of them to relocate to Glendale. The presence of the church thus seems to have resonated especially with select Armenians, such as those from Iraq.

As Armenians' numbers swelled, the pre-existing Anglo community often responded virulently. This antipathy appeared in newspaper journals, city hall meetings, and interpersonal relations. As one non-Armenian former reporter shared in an interview:

[Armenians] were coming up against such hatred you wouldn't believe.... The hatred was so strong. I remember we had a reporter at the newspaper whose name was Tanya Soussan, and people would see that as "Soussanian" or assume she changed it. And all of us would get calls virtually everyday. But she would get the nastiest calls. "You're one of them. And I can see you just wrote this story to help them. You didn't mention the robber in this was Armenian... wasn't it?! Wasn't it?!"

Armenians received backlash from various socioeconomic quarters: Anglos responded harshly to wealthy Armenians in the north for the elaborate designs of their homes ("mansionization") and the less affluent Armenians for their dense concentration in the south. Development in Glendale had become negatively associated with Armenian overpopulation. For many Glendale natives, Armenians disrupted Glendale's homogeneity and normalcy. Ironically, the backlash probably only helped create, in turn, its own backlash—that is, an increased sense of ethnic cohesion among an otherwise internally diverse and fragmented population. And this cohesion would have

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significant political implications—at present, Armenians occupy a visible majority (80 percent) of electoral seats in Glendale. Armenians, who had been disregarded as politically insignificant throughout the 1980s, emerged in the late 1990s as a dominant political force. And their business and real estate endeavors, now commonplace throughout the expansive city, also saturated the market.

Armenian presence in Glendale is now practically omnipresent: Armenian shops, restaurants, grocery stores, bakeries, and delis appear on every major artery throughout the city. Armenian businesspeople own and operate many of the non-Armenian establishments as well. Also, as stated, local politics has a distinctly demographic slant. Between 2005 and 2009, there existed a majority Armenian population on Glendale's city council. The majority was regained in 2013 and has remained to date. By voting in increasing number and electing majority officials on the city council (as well as the city school board), Glendale Armenians have relied on Armenian American leadership to make claims and reallocate resources that specifically cater to the Armenian population. These reallocations include affordable senior housing, increased park space (particularly in south Glendale, which has the greatest concentration of Armenian residents), the availability of all city voting material in the Armenian language, the development of a public Armenian Center, the passage of dual immersion (Armenian/English) language programs in public schools, the establishment of April 24 as a school holiday to commemorate the Armenian genocide, the approval to build an Armenian Museum in central Glendale, and other issues. These and many other influences result from Armenians' demographic concentration in the city itself.

Conclusion

Armenians in Greater Los Angeles have evolved and acquired significant influence politically and economically. They play an integral role in Los Angeles's ethnic mosaic. When Adam Schiff defeated James Rogan for the 27th District Senate seat in 2000, both politicians took trips to Armenia, pledged support for genocide recognition, and spoke against Turkish policies. *The Economist* even printed an op-ed entitled "From Monica to Armenia." More recently, during 2016's 25th District Senate race, Supervisor Michael Antonovich unveiled an Armenian genocide monument in Los Angeles's Grand Park, while Anthony Portantino traveled to Armenia with city councilmember Zareh Sinanyan, and even enrolled in Armenian language courses at Glendale's Community College. Armenians' story resembles that of many other immigrants, and yet it possesses a character distinctly its own. Their history and contributions warrant more extensive documentation.

Glendale Armenians make up one of the most visible diasporic outposts in Armenian history. Their contributions in several sectors of Glendale are striking. However, the history of any community does not exist in a vacuum. As this article reflects, such a history is as much about events taking shape around it as about the community itself. The manner in which this brief history has been constructed is intended as a corrective. Many ethnic community histories rely too heavily on linear and narrowly focused narratives. These accounts present history as though it existed outside of the historical settlements that condition them. As such, the diversity of this community itself, as well as the events shaping it, are at times neglected. A central assumption of this historical overview is that community formation occurs within a complex matrix of local, international, and institutional variables. These variables participate in a dialectic process that facilitates the movement and, eventually, the character of the community itself.

In this brief article, I have provided an intentionally cursory history of Armenian settlement of Los Angeles; considerably more work is required. A thorough historical treatment of Armenians' history in Los Angeles warrants a much larger research project. While their demographic concentration elsewhere may not match that in Glendale, Armenians have contributed to various localities throughout Los Angeles. Their histories help explain several facets of the community itself as well as American cultural history. In addition, Armenian American case studies can enrich our understanding of various academic topics—including ethnic history, political incorporation, immigration, transnationalism, assimilation, panethnicity, and ethnicization. Armenian influence is salient in several spheres of Angeleno culture. As several key events laid the foundation for the emergence of new ethnic communities after 1965, these communities, in turn, shaped key aspects of American civilization and policy-making. I hope this brief history initiates more scholarship on the external contributions and internal workings of the Armenian Angeleno community.

¹ When the audience is Armenophone, I often use the term “Hreshtakahay” to refer to an Armenian Angeleno. This

² Malcolm Vartan Malcolm, *The Armenians in America*. Pilgrim Press, 1910), 50.

³ Ibid., 197–199.

⁴ Sebouh Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

⁵ Robert Mirak, *Torn between two Lands: Armenians in America, 1890 to World War I* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1983).

⁶ The poem features in Peter Force, ed., *Tracts and Other Papers*, vol. 3, no. 53 (1886), 31–35.

⁷ Ibid., 36.

⁸ Robert Mirak, *Torn between two Lands: Armenians in America, 1890 to World War I* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1983).

⁹ Berge Bulbulian, *The Fresno Armenians: History of a Diaspora Community* (Fresno: California State University Press, 2000).

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- ¹⁰ Richard T. LaPiere, *The Armenian Colony in Fresno County, California: A Study in Social Psychology*, vol. 2, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1930), appendix 4.
- ¹¹ Mirak, *Torn between Two Lands*, 13.
- ¹² LaPiere, *The Armenian Colony in Fresno County*, 2:160.
- ¹³ Mirak, *Torn between Two Lands*, 71.
- ¹⁴ Anny Bakalian, *Armenian-Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian* (London: Transaction Publishers, 1993), 10.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Harold Takooshian, "Armenian Immigration to the United States from the Middle East," *Journal of Armenian Studies* 3, no. 1–2 (1986): 133–155.
- ¹⁷ Sidney Heitman, "The Third Soviet Emigration: Jewish German and Armenian Migration from the USSR since World War II" (1987, 79). *Berichte des Bundesinstituts für Ostwissenschaftliche und Internationale Studien*, no. 21-198.
- ¹⁸ Mirak, *Torn between two Lands*, 111.
- ¹⁹ Bulbulian, *The Fresno Armenians* 22.
- ²⁰ LaPiere, *The Armenian Colony in Fresno County*.
- ²¹ Mirak, *Torn between Two Lands*, 113.
- ²² Bulbulian, *The Fresno Armenians*, 55.
- ²³ Ibid., 73.
- ²⁴ For further details on the local prejudiced leveled at Armenians, see LaPiere, *The Armenian Colony in Fresno County*, Mirak, *Torn between Two Lands*, and, for how these prejudiced affected the second generation, Bulbulian, *The Fresno Armenians*.
- ²⁵ Mirak, *Torn between Two Lands*, 119.
- ²⁶ Susan Wiley Hardwick, *Russian Refuge: Religion, Migration, and Settlement on the North American Pacific Rim* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).
- ²⁷ Mirak, *Torn between Two Lands*, 57.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 58.
- ²⁹ Karen Wilson, "Reexamining Los Angeles" Lower East Side: Jewish Bakers Union Local 453 and Yiddish Food Culture in 1920s Boyle Heights," in *Jews in the Los Angeles Mosaic*, University of California Press, 2013.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 28.
- ³¹ Jules Tygiel, "Metropolis in the Making: Los Angeles in the 1920s," in *Metropolis in the Making: Los Angeles in the 1920s*, edited by Thomas Sitton and William Deverell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 1-10.
- ³² See also the following: <http://sundown.afro.illinois.edu/sundowntownsshow.php?id=1107>.
- ³³ *Glendale Evening News*, January 8, 1919.
- ³⁴ *Glendale Evening News*, January 20, 1919.
- ³⁵ Aram Yeretizian, "A History of Armenian Immigration to America with Special Reference to Conditions in Los Angeles" (Master's Thesis, University of Southern California, 1923), 38.
- ³⁶ *Glendale Evening News*, July 22, 1922. In Van, Armenians launched a defense against the Ottomans during the Hamidian Massacres in 1896. The same community would also defend itself against the Ottomans during the genocide in 1915. This latter initiative is known as the Defense or Siege of Van.
- ³⁷ *Glendale News-Press*, August 28, 1976.
- ³⁸ *Glendale News-Press*, April 24, 1985.
- ³⁹ Talar Chahinian and Anny Bakalian, "Language in Armenian American Communities: Western Armenian and Efforts for Preservation," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 237 (2016): 37–57.
- ⁴⁰ Alexander Benjamin, "Armenian and American: The Changing Face of Ethnic Identity and Diasporic Nationalism, 1915–1955" (PhD diss., The City University of New York, 2005).
- ⁴¹ However, this is not to suggest that Pasadena did not also experience a surge in Armenian inhabitants.
- ⁴² See these newspaper articles: *Daily News*, "Schools Seeks Funds to Aid Armenians," March 20, 1988; *Glendale News-Press*, "Armenian Emigration Threatens Funds," April 1, 1988; *Los Angeles Times*, "Supervisors OK Funds for Armenian Groups," November 11, 1989.
- ⁴³ Gary Gerstle, "Acquiescence or Transformation? Divergent Paths of Political Incorporation in America," In *Outsiders No More? Models of Immigrant Political Incorporation*, edited by J. Hochschild, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 306–320.

⁴⁴ Prior to 1965, the Egyptian Revolution (1952) had also depopulated a prominent Middle Eastern Armenian community and brought many Armenians to the United States. To be sure, Armenian communities continue to thrive in some places, such as Beirut and Tehran, but in much smaller numbers.

⁴⁵ M. Mehdi Bozorgmehr and Georges Sabagh, "High Status Immigrants: A Statistical Profile of Iranians in the United States," *Iranian Studies* 21, no. 3/4 (1998).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴⁷ Homa Katouzian, *The Political Economy of Modern Iran* (New York: New York University Press, 1981).

⁴⁸ Juliet Arroyo, *Glendale, 1940–2000: Images of America* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2006).

⁴⁹ See http://articles.latimes.com/1996-06-16/opinion/op-15622_1_city-officials. Glendale's 'Racist Shadow' Shrinks as City Transforms Itself," Gregory Rodriguez, June 16, 1996.

⁵⁰ For more information, see Arroyo, *Glendale*.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁵² Bakalian, *Armenian-Americans*.